Strawberry Shortcake
Meet Rainbow Sherbet
Berry Points INSIDE!

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Meet Rainbow Sherbet

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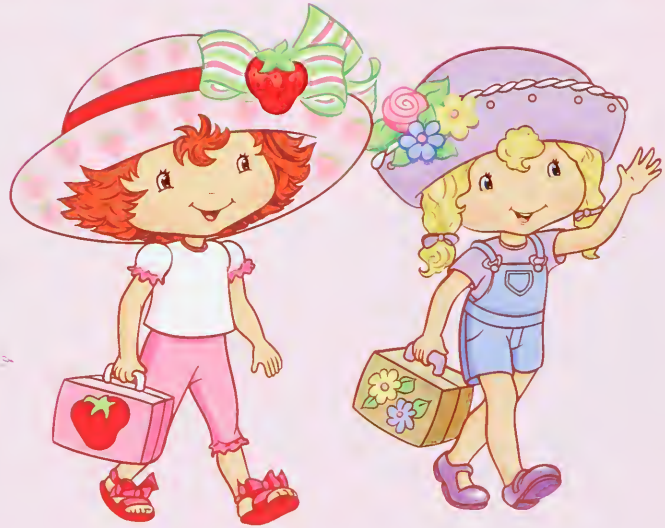

By Sudipta Bardhan-Quallen
Illustrated by Josie Yee

Grosset & Dunlap

One beautiful sunny day, Strawberry Shortcake was getting ready to go on vacation. "Let's see," she said as she packed her suitcase. "Shorts, T-shirts, toothbrush—and I can't forget my pajamas!"

Just then, there was a knock at the door. It was Angel Cake.

"Hi, Strawberry," Angel said. "Are you ready to go? We don't want to miss the boat!"

"I'm berry excited!" Strawberry exclaimed. "I've never been on a boat trip before!"

"Me, neither," replied Angel. "I'm so glad we met Rainbow Sherbet. She's berry nice."

Strawberry Shortcake nodded. "And I know we're going to have a great time!"

Strawberry and Angel hurried down the Berry Trail toward Punchbowl Pond. When they arrived, they found a beautiful rainbow boat floating in the pond.

"Hello," called Strawberry Shortcake. "Is anybody home?"

"There sure is!" a girl called from the deck.

"Hi, Rainbow Sherbet," Angel Cake said, waving.

"Welcome to the good ship Rainbow Float," Rainbow Sherbet said. "Meet my shipmate, Triple Ripple Toucan. He's excited about our trip, too!"

Just then, Huckleberry Pie, Orange Blossom, Ginger Snap, and Blueberry Muffin walked up the Berry Trail. "Hi, Rainbow!" they called.

"Ahoy there!" Rainbow Sherbet replied happily. "Climb aboard, mateys!"

"We brought lots of stuff for the trip," said Ginger Snap. She held up a plate of cookies. "These are for late-night snacks."

Blueberry Muffin had a pail of blueberries. "We can eat these with ice cream."

"Here's some juice I made from the juiciest oranges in Orange Blossom Acres," Orange Blossom said shyly.

"I brought a map," said Huckleberry. "It will help us get to—uh—wherever we're going. Hey, Rainbow—where are we going?"

"Good question, Huck!" Rainbow replied. "I've charted a course that will take us all around Strawberryland," she explained, pointing to Punchbowl Pond on the map. "We start here, and then we'll sail down the Soda Stream to Ice Cream Island."

"That will take us by Seaberry Beach," said Strawberry.

Rainbow Sherbet nodded. "The River Fudge will take us right to the Sundae Mountains—and the River Fudge Falls!"

Strawberry clapped her hands excitedly. "Wow, we've never been to the River Fudge Falls before!"

"Yeah, you can only get there by boat," added Huck.

"I know," said Rainbow Sherbet. "I thought it would be berry cool to take you guys somewhere new!"

"There's a lot to do before we can set sail," Rainbow Sherbet continued. "We have to put the food in the galley, check the life jackets, and make sure everything on the starboard side and the port side is in shipshape! Then we can cast off."

The kids looked confused. "What?" Blueberry Muffin finally asked.

Rainbow laughed. "Sorry! I was using sea slang. The ship's kitchen is called the galley. It's downstairs." She pointed below deck. "The right side of the boat is the starboard side. And the left side is the port side. After we check both sides, we'll untie the boat from the dock—that's called casting off."

"We can get everything done in no time—if we work together," Strawberry said.

The kids quickly split into teams. Strawberry helped Rainbow check the boat. Orange and Angel took the food to the galley. Blueberry Muffin and Ginger Snap counted the life jackets to make sure there were enough for everybody. And Huck did a great job casting off!

Finally, the boat was ready. "It's time to set sail!" Rainbow announced. She started up the engines and the Rainbow Float was off!

"*Whoa*!" Strawberry cried. "Hang on, everybody—the boat's rocking back and forth!"

But before Strawberry finished talking, Angel Cake fell. "Ouch!" she cried.

Strawberry Shortcake rushed over to help Angel up. "Are you okay?" she asked.

Angel Cake rubbed her knee. "I think so," she mumbled as her face turned red.

"Be careful, Angel," called Rainbow Sherbet. "It takes time to get your sea legs."

"Why do I need sea legs?" asked Angel. "What's wrong with my regular ones?"

"Sea legs aren't real legs," Rainbow explained. "That just means you need to learn to balance while you're sailing."

Angel Cake turned away. *No one else is having trouble with their sea legs*, she thought. *Or their real legs!*

The Rainbow Float sailed out of Punchbowl Pond and down the Soda Stream. Soon, they passed an island made of ice cream.

"Look—there's Ice Cream Island!" Blueberry Muffin exclaimed.

"That makes me hungry," said Rainbow Sherbet. "Let's make ice cream sundaes." She hurried down to the galley and soon returned with lots of ice cream and toppings so the kids could make their favorite sundaes.

Angel Cake tried to carry her sundae out to the deck, but she lost her balance on the way. "Not again!" moaned Angel. "I can't believe I keep falling."

"It's okay," Rainbow said kindly. "When I started sailing, I fell down all the time. But you'll get used to being at sea soon enough—I promise."

Angel Cake wasn't so sure. She stayed in her chair while the other kids went back to the railing. *I don't think I like being on a boat*, she thought. *I miss being on the ground.*

Suddenly, Orange Blossom spotted Seaberry Beach. "There it is!" she cried.

"I love visiting Seaberry Beach," Strawberry Shortcake said. "Next time we go there, you can come with us, Rainbow!"

Rainbow Sherbet grinned. "I can't wait!"

The Rainbow Float sailed on, and soon Seaberry Beach was out of sight.

"In a few minutes," said Strawberry, "we'll be able to see Strawberryland."

Angel still felt a little wobbly, but she went to the railing to look for Strawberry's house. It looked like a tiny red dot in the middle of the green hills. *We've gone berry far*, she thought. *I don't think I've ever been so far from Cakewalk.*

That evening, Orange Blossom and Strawberry Shortcake helped Rainbow Sherbet in the galley as she made dinner.

"Rainbow told me that fresh air makes sailors hungry," said Blueberry Muffin as she helped set the table.

"Well, I'm super hungry!" Huckleberry Pie exclaimed. "I hope it's time to eat soon!"

"You're in luck, Huck!" called Rainbow Sherbet as she carried a big platter of spaghetti up to the deck. "We're going to eat right now!"

Everyone started eating the yummy dinner—except for Angel Cake. *I'm not very hungry*, she thought as she picked at her food.

"Tomorrow, Rainbow's going to show me how to steer the boat," Huck said.

"I can't wait to climb the Sundae Mountains," Ginger replied.

Angel Cake just sighed and turned away. *I don't want to spend another day on this boat*, she thought. *I wish we were on our way home.*

At bedtime, the kids said good night and settled into their bunks. Angel was tired, but she couldn't sleep. *Sleeping in a bunk feels so different*, she thought. *I miss my own bed.*

Everyone else seemed to like the bunks, though. Angel Cake could hear lots of yawning and snoring.

"Good night, Triple Ripple," Rainbow Sherbet said to her pet. "Sleep tight!"

Triple Ripple Toucan squawked in reply. Hearing Rainbow Sherbet's pet reminded Angel Cake of her own pet lamb.

I miss Vanilla Icing, Angel Cake thought miserably. *I wish I could say good night to her.* As a tear trickled down her cheek, Angel hid her face in her pillow so no one would hear her crying.

In the morning, Angel Cake woke up before anyone else. She slipped out of the cabin and went up to the deck. "I wish I could just go home," she mumbled. "I wish this trip was over already!"

Suddenly, Angel Cake felt a hand on her shoulder. "We heard you come on the deck," Rainbow Sherbet said quietly.

"Is everything okay, Angel?" asked Strawberry Shortcake.

Angel Cake looked up at her friends and started to cry. "I'm just so homesick," she sobbed. "I've never been away from home for this long! I miss Cakewalk, my bed, Vanilla Icing—everything!"

Rainbow Sherbet said to Angel Cake, "It's okay, Angel. I know how you feel."

"You do?" asked Angel Cake, wiping her eyes.

Rainbow nodded. "I've always loved to go on adventures. But I used to get really homesick, too." She smiled at Angel and Strawberry. "That's why I live on the Rainbow Float! When I travel, my home comes with me."

"And you don't get homesick," Angel Cake said.

"That's true," Strawberry Shortcake said gently, "but you know what? Home is really where your heart is. You can always take your home with you—wherever you go."

Angel Cake thought for a moment about what Strawberry had said. Then she smiled. "I think I know what you mean, Strawberry," she said. "And you're absolutely right!"

The three girls walked down to the galley to make breakfast. Before long, everyone else woke up, too.

"You guys are up early," yawned Orange Blossom.

"Well, there's a lot of berry cool stuff to do today!" said Angel Cake. She turned to the other kids. "Let's hurry up and eat breakfast—I can already see the Sundae Mountains, so we must be getting close!"

After breakfast, the kids took turns using Rainbow Sherbet's spyglass to look for the River Fudge Falls.

"Look!" cried Angel Cake. "I see them!"

"Everybody, grab a mug to catch some chocolate!" Rainbow Sherbet exclaimed. "I'll steer the boat close to the falls!"

As Rainbow Sherbet brought the Rainbow Float to the base of the River Fudge Falls, the kids carefully leaned over to fill their mugs with chocolaty fudge.

"Here, Rainbow," said Angel Cake. "I filled two mugs—one for me and one for you. And I didn't slip or fall or anything!"

"Thanks, Angel," Rainbow Sherbet replied. "It looks like you've got your sea legs!"

Later, the kids climbed up the Sundae Mountains to get a better view of the River Fudge Falls.

"Wow—you can see all of Strawberryland from here!" exclaimed Strawberry.

"Look over there!" Angel said to Rainbow, pointing to Cakewalk. "That's where I live."

"Your home is berry beautiful!" said Rainbow Sherbet.

"It sure is," replied Angel Cake, "but Strawberry was right—home is where the heart is. And right now, my heart is here with my friends!"

Strawberry Shortcake is going tropical.

5.5"
Berry Best Friends

Strawberry Shortcake

Angel Cake

Ginger Snap

Blueberry Muffin

Rainbow Sherbet

10"
Berry Soft Friends

Orange Blossom

Strawberry Shortcake

Angel Cake

Strawberry Shortcake

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($5.99 CAN)

Strawberry Shortcake
and her friends are berry
excited—they're going on a trip
on Rainbow Sherbet's houseboat!
Everyone has a great time . . .
until Angel Cake starts to feel homesick.
How can she enjoy the journey when
everything she loves is so far away?

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